

REMARKS

Claims 1-10 are pending.

Claim 1 has been amended to more clearly define the invention.

In the Office Action, claims 1-5 and 8-9 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over PTO 892 Reference U ("Craig's List"), in view of US Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0128622 to Mountain, et al. ("Mountain"), and further in view of US Patent Application Publication No. 2001/0029473 to Yamaoka, et al. ("Yamaoka"). Further in the Action, claim 6 was rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Craig's List, in view of Mountain and Yamaoka, and further in view of PTO 892 Reference V ("Net News"). On page 10 of the Action, claim 7 was rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Craig's List, in view of Mountain and Yamaoka, and further in view of U.S. Published Patent Application No. 2002/0007324 to Centner, et al. ("Centner"). On page 11 of the Action, claim 10 was rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Craig's List, in view of Mountain and Yamaoka, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,727,156 issued to Herr-Hoyman, et al. ("Herr"). These rejections are deemed moot in view of the present amendment. However, a survey of the cited art and applicant's invention is provided below.

The present invention discloses an electronic bulletin board that is dedicated to the requirements of a single organization. The bulletin board allows the organization to publish all of its requirements so that producers, service providers and other vendors can view the organization's requirements. The requirements listed in the present solicitation bulletin board are those of one single organization, meaning the same organization purchases every item listed in the bulletin board. No fee is charged for listing requirements in the present publication, as the buyer/organization also administers the bulletin board. There is no third party involved. Further, no members of the public are allowed to post listings in the present publication. Moreover, all forms and information necessary to conduct business with the organization are included in the publication. The publication also includes forms such as Requests for Information and Quotes that the vendor can fill out and submit electronically.

Amended claim 1, for example, recites "electronically publishing a single organization's requirements in an electronic publication that provides vendors with information needed to business with the organization comprising the steps of: categorizing the single organization's requirements...., wherein each category includes one or more items required by the organization, and further wherein each item is a product or service required by the organization;.... posting all forms and information necessary for the vendors to conduct business with the single organization, including a request for information form, a quotes form and a proposal form, in a format that allows editing of the forms by the vendors and submission of an edited form to the organization electronically;..."

Craig's List teaches an electronic version of the classified "ads" (advertisement(s), hereinafter "ads" or "ad"). Members of the public place ads in Craig's List, just as they would in the classified ad section of their local newspaper. However, instead of their ad being published in the local paper, the ad is published on the Internet, in the Craig's List website. The website is divided into categories, just as the classified ad section of the paper. The vast majority of the items listed on Craig's List are offered for sale, and not for purchase. Sellers with items listed for sale, in the most popular categories of Craig's List, are charged a fee for publication. Moreover, since Craig's List publishes ads that are placed by the public, there are, generally speaking, different buyers and sellers for every item listed in the publication. In a classic buyer-seller relationship, Craig's List is a third party that serves the needs of many sellers and many buyers. The third party facilitator provided by Craig's List is not needed in the present electronic bulletin board.

On page 3 of the Action, the Examiner alleges that page 1 of "PTO 892 U teaches: categorizing the buyer's requirements...wherein each category includes one or more items required by the buyer...wherein an item is a product or service required by the buyer." What page 1 of Craig's List actually teaches is categorizing the requirements of multiple buyers into categories. Craig's List is available to an unlimited number of buyers, and each item listed is not the requirement of a single buyer.

Craig's List fails to disclose "electronically publishing a single organization's requirements comprising the steps of: categorizing the single organization's requirements...., wherein each category includes one or more items required by the organization, and further wherein each item is a product or service required by the organization;.... posting all forms and information necessary for the vendors to conduct business with the single organization, including a request for information form, a quotes form and a proposal form, in a format that allows editing of the forms by the vendors and submission of an edited form to the organization electronically;..."

Mountain teaches a service that allows subscribers to receive selected information from publishers. The subscriber can register to receive selected stock quotes, for example, from a publisher of stock information. An employer subscriber can also register to receive "employee update" information, and whenever an employee updates his contact information, the employer is notified. The service is intended to be use-able by any operating systems and over the Internet.

On page 5 of the Action, it is asserted that Mountain teaches a bulletin board that lists the requirements of a corporation or small business. What Mountain actually teaches is that is easier to implement a service on a intranet because everyone uses the same operating system. Making the same service available over the Internet, where different operating systems are used, is more difficult and costly.

Mountain fails to disclose "electronically publishing a single organization's requirements comprising the steps of: categorizing the single organization's requirements...., wherein each category includes one or more items required by the organization, and further wherein each item is a product or service required by the organization;.... posting all forms and information necessary for the vendors to conduct business with the single organization, including a request for information form, a quotes form and a proposal form, in a format that allows editing of the forms by the vendors and submission of an edited form to the organization electronically;..."

Yamaoka teaches a database of repair parts and suppliers for a company. See Abstract. The database allows employees to find the exact part that is needed and the preferred supplier for

procuring the part. See paragraphs 0008, 0013 and 0014. Since the suppliers for the parts are listed in the database of Yamaoka, there is no need to publish the company's requirements.

Yamaoka fails to disclose "electronically publishing a single organization's requirements comprising the steps of: categorizing the single organization's requirements...., wherein each category includes one or more items required by the organization, and further wherein each item is a product or service required by the organization;.... posting all forms and information necessary for the vendors to conduct business with the single organization, including a request for information form, a quotes form and a proposal form, in a format that allows editing of the forms by the vendors and submission of an edited form to the organization electronically;..."

Net News teaches an on-line auction website, similar to e-bay, that is available to the public. Both, buyers and sellers are required to register with the website, if they want to conduct business in Net News. The needs of thousands of buyers are met by the service provided in Net News. Further, the multiple buyers in Net News are responding to items listed for sale, not for purchase, in the publication. Net News teaches away from the present invention by requiring registration of both buyers and sellers. Registration of buyers is not an issue in the present invention, as there is only one buyer, the organization. Net News is another 3rd party in the buyer-seller relationship. There is no 3rd party involved in the present system.

Net News fails to disclose "electronically publishing a single organization's requirements comprising the steps of: categorizing the single organization's requirements...., wherein each category includes one or more items required by the organization, and further wherein each item is a product or service required by the organization;.... posting all forms and information necessary for the vendors to conduct business with the single organization, including a request for information form, a quotes form and a proposal form, in a format that allows editing of the forms by the vendors and submission of an edited form to the organization electronically;..."

Centner teaches a web-based service for buyers and sellers. The buyers set up accounts with the Centner service and each account includes a list of preferred suppliers. Posted listings from the buyers are sent out directly to the preferred suppliers associated with each buyer. The

buyers' accounts are stored on Centner service hardware, and the Centner service is responsible for administration of the accounts. Thus, access to the accounts is not limited to the buyers. Centner represents another system wherein a 3rd party, or middleman, must be involved in the buyer-seller relationship.

Centner fails to disclose "electronically publishing a single organization's requirements comprising the steps of: categorizing the single organization's requirements...., wherein each category includes one or more items required by the organization, and further wherein each item is a product or service required by the organization;.... posting all forms and information necessary for the vendors to conduct business with the single organization, including a request for information form, a quotes form and a proposal form, in a format that allows editing of the forms by the vendors and submission of an edited form to the organization electronically;..."

Herr teaches a simple method for protecting hypertext documents once they have been uploaded to a server and made available to others via the Internet. The method involves the use of a unique identifier, and subsequent password, that are given to a document's author. Subsequent access to the document, for modification purposes, can only be obtained with the author's password.


Herr fails to disclose "electronically publishing a single organization's requirements comprising the steps of: categorizing the single organization's requirements...., wherein each category includes one or more items required by the organization, and further wherein each item is a product or service required by the organization;.... posting all forms and information necessary for the vendors to conduct business with the single organization, including a request for information form, a quotes form and a proposal form, in a format that allows editing of the forms by the vendors and submission of an edited form to the organization electronically;..."

The teachings of Mountain, Yamaoka, Net News, Centner and Herr do not make up for the deficiencies of Craig's List. None of the references teach an electronic publication that is dedicated to a single organization, wherein every item listed in the publication is a requirement of a single organization. The combination of Craig's List, Mountain, Yamaoke, Net News,

Centner and Herr due not teach, and in fact teach away from, the present system, as is recited in amended claim 1. For all of the above reasons, claim 1 is considered allowable over any combination of Craig's List, Mountain, Yamaoka, Net News, Centner and Herr. Claims 2-10 depend from claim 1 and are considered allowable for at least the same reasons.

All claims being allowable, a Notice to that effect is respectfully requested. If any questions remain, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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